

More support to Vermont communities for long-term revitalization is on the way, according to Senator Patrick Leahy, Senator Bernie Sanders and Congressman Peter Welch (D). They announced Wednesday that the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development has been given a \$300,000 investment award by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA).

The award, which is funded through the Fiscal Year 2012 Disaster Relief Opportunity administered by the EDA, will support long-term recovery, spur job creation, leverage private investments and promote disaster resilience in Vermont communities. Leahy, Sanders, and Welch all pushed last year for this critical funding at EDA to support the state's business community in the wake of Tropical Storm Irene.

The EDA investment funds the development of a state-wide long-term economic recovery strategy for Vermont. The strategy will help state agencies and departments to develop and implement policies that will support regional growth, create a more resilient economy in the wake of Tropical Storm Irene, and mitigate the impact of future disasters.

In a joint statement, Leahy, Sanders and Welch said: "This infusion of funding from the EDA will speed the recovery of many communities still finding their footing after Irene. One year on, Vermonters continue to pull together as neighbors and friends to support each another. This investment will help state agencies offer targeted assistance to those working so hard to rebuild and recover and will strengthen our state's economy as we rebound from the damage."

Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin said: "This EDA award will allow Vermont to create an economic development plan that will serve as a roadmap for job creation opportunities in a post-Irene economy"

Lawrence Miller, Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development said: "We look forward to leading an inclusive process that brings forward ideas from Vermonters from all walks of life to build a shared strategy to build a more resilient economy and help all Vermonters improve their quality of life."

In the wake of Irene, Leahy, Sanders and Welch fought to include \$200 million in the FY12 federal budget to enable the Economic Development Administration to make competitive grants to states and organizations to help rebuild resilient economies in communities struck by federally declared disasters in 2011. This \$300,000 grant is the first of this disaster funding to reach Vermont, but Vermont organizations have submitted \$10 million in grant requests to the Economic Development Administration to create loan funds, rebuild infrastructure and for other purposes. Applications are still being accepted by the Economic Development Administration.

For more information, please [click here](#).